

Streets of Laredo (The Cowboy's Lament)

Francis Henry Maynard (1853-1926)

As I walked out in the streets of Laredo

As I walked out in Laredo one day,

I spied a poor cowboy, all wrapped in white
linen

All wrapped in white linen and cold as the clay.

"I see by your outfit, that you are a cowboy."

These words he did say as I slowly passed by.

"Come sit down beside me and hear my sad
story,

For I'm shot in the chest, and today I must die."

"'Twas once in the saddle I used to go dashing,

'Twas once in the saddle I used to go gay.

First down to Rosie's, and then to the card-
house,

Got shot in the chest, and I'm dying today."

"Oh, beat the drum slowly and play the fife
lowly,

And play the dead march as you carry me along;

Take me to the green valley, there lay the sod
o'er me,

For I'm a young cowboy and I know I've done
wrong."

"Get six jolly cowboys to carry my coffin,

Get six pretty maidens to bear up my pall.

Put bunches of roses all over my coffin,

Roses to deaden the clods as they fall."

"Then swing your rope slowly and rattle your
spurs lowly,

And give a wild whoop as you carry me along;

And in the grave throw me and roll the sod o'er
me.

For I'm a young cowboy and I know I've done
wrong."

"Go bring me a cup, a cup of cold water.

To cool my parched lips", the cowboy then said.

Before I returned, his soul had departed,

And gone to the round up – the cowboy was
dead.

We beat the drum slowly and played the fife
lowly,

And bitterly wept as we bore him along.

For we loved our comrade, so brave, young and
handsome,

We all loved our comrade, although he'd done
wrong.